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RULING ON INTERNAL ORDER AND ORGANIZATION OF
OKRUG AND PEOPLE'S COURTS IN BULGARIA

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[The following ruling on internal order and organization of okrug and people's courts gives further information on the court procedure which was established in the Law on the Structure of the Courts, published in Izvestiya, No 92, 1952. The ruling replaced those parts of the Ruling on Internal Order, Cases, and the Responsibility of the Courts published in Durzhaven Vestnik, No 90, 19 April 1940, and all okrug rulings and instructions which conflict with it.]

The work of the okrug court (okruzhen sud) is organized and directed by the chairman of the court (people's judge). The chairman exercises administrative control and assists the people's courts (narodno sudilishte) in the district (rayon) of the okrug court personally or through vice-chairmen.

The vice-chairman of an independent section (otdelenie) of the okrug court performs the duties of the chairman in the district of that independent section.

The work of the people's court is organized and directed by the people's judge (narodnen sudiya). He exercises administrative control over the court executors (sudeben izpulnitel) and notaries attached to the court and he appoints and discharges employees under them. If the court executors or notaries work in the districts of more than one people's court, control is exercised by the court which is designated by an order from the Ministry of Justice.

The chairman of the okrug court is responsible for eliminating irregularities in the exercising of authority and brings important cases to the notice of the Ministry of Justice.

Two divisions (kolegiya), criminal and civil, are formed in okrug courts having more than five judges. The chairman of the court assigns the judges to the divisions. Each division is directed by a chairman or a vice-chairman. Permanent staffs (postoyanen sustav) are formed for reviewing second-instance cases in the divisions.

Seniority of judges in the same area is determined by their length of service in that area. If the judges were elected to the post at the same time, seniority is determined according to length of service as a judge, or to length of time in legal practice. Seniority among court members (sudeben zasedatel) is determined by age.

The chairman of the okrug court calls official meetings of the directors of individual [Court] services or of all employees, to discuss questions on the work of the court, to review instructions and other ordinances of the Ministry of Justice, and to examine revised acts. The chairman of the okrug court calls periodic general meetings of judges to standardize legal practice and to review other questions in connection with their work. Minutes are taken at both official and general meetings.

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The administrative secretary, upon the proposal of the court, organizes the work of the court office (sudebna kantselariya), explains it to the employees, preserves discipline, and reports irregularities to the chairman of the court. When there is no section clerk (otdelen domakin), the administrative secretary fulfills his duties and when there is no section cashier (otdelen kasier), the administrative secretary takes care of the financial and accounting duties of the court and keeps material evidence and documents. The administrative secretary summons the court members. Under the control of the chairman of the okrug court, he maintains current and general archives.

The secretary of the [court] session (sekretar na zasedanieto) summons the court members to preliminary and open sessions composes the protocols for the sessions; attends to fulfillment of court ordinances; attaches written evidence, protocols, and the legal act to the case after each session; prepares the list of persons to be summoned before the trial opens; issues vouchers for expenses to witnesses and material witnesses; certifies the time of appearance in court and the time of release of persons summoned and of court members; and performs other duties assigned to him by the chairman of the court or by the administrative secretary.

Under Article 25 of the Labor Code, the chairman of the okrug court may charge employees with duties other than those for which they were appointed.

A main bureau for delivering summons, a cashier service, general archives, and a library are organized in each building which contains one or more people's courts. These services are under the control of one of the people's courts, designated by the chairman of the okrug court, and are directed by an administrative secretary.

When various legal institutions are located in the same building, the above services can also be organized. In this case, they are under the control of the director of the highest legal institution and under the direction of the official designated by him.

A bureau for delivering summons is formed for all legal institutions in districts where there is an okrug court or a section. Where there are two or more people's judges in one district, the conviction bureau is under the supervision of one of them.

When two or more people's courts are located in one building, they have a general office for notaries' current archives.

The courts do their work according to yearly, quarterly, and monthly plans established by the Ministry of Justice.

All courts compose and send to the Ministry of Justice, within 15 days after the end of the period, quarterly and yearly statistical reports on their activities, including an account of plan fulfillment, work methods, and weaknesses.

The following section deals with various types of cases, court complaint books, the handling of various documents and record books, and finished and unfinished cases.

The succeeding chapter headings cover the settlement of cases; closed and preliminary sessions; court activities outside the court; court orders; material evidence and documents; second-instance cases in the okrug court; court action on cases of complaints on the action of notaries and court executors; court action on decrees and other acts issued by nonjudicial bodies; and the carrying out of verdicts, decisions, settlements, and other regulations.]

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